Data Collection Services for the USAID/Zambia Education Project

Zambia 2016 Grade 2 NAS Implementation Plan

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Abbreviations

DFID	British Department for International Development
ECZ	Examinations Council of Zambia
EdData II	Education Data for Decision Making project
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
G2	grade 2
INESOR	Institute for Economic and Social Research, University of Zambia
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
MOGE	Ministry of General Education
NAS	National Assessment Survey
ODCs	other direct costs
PPS	probability proportional to size
RTI	RTI International (registered trademark and trade name of Research Triangle Institute)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

In early 2014, the then Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE)[1] tasked the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) with adding a grade 2 (G2) survey to its National Assessment Programme, which up to that point included surveys in grades 5 and 9. These National Assessment Surveys (NASs) are meant to take place every two years. For the 2014 G2 NAS, ECZ received technical assistance from RTI International, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to carry out the G2 NAS for the first time.[2] The technical assistance covered all aspects of the survey process, from sample design and instrument development through assessor training, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. A report of findings from the 2014 G2 NAS was produced and includes conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the dissemination events that took place in Lusaka and in the provinces.[3]

By the time of writing this report, ECZ was preparing to conduct Zambia's second G2 NAS. A two-week workshop was convened February 8–18, 2016, to plan and prepare for this survey. The workshop was facilitated by RTI International with support from the University of Zambia's Institute for Economic and Social Research (INESOR). This report describes the outcomes of that workshop, beginning with the research questions that ECZ developed that will drive the planned survey. This is followed by the sample design and plan, which mirrors the 2014 G2 NAS. Next, a costed implementation plan outlines each major activity and its estimated cost. These costs were calculated using a tool designed to aid in carrying out budgeting activities for Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRAs). The tool was tailored for Zambia using actual cost inputs. Lastly, a timeline for the G2 NAS shows the implementation plan from start to finish.

This report is complemented by another document, the *EGRA and EGMA Toolkits*, also tailored to the Zambian context, which provides ECZ with background information about the history of the assessment tools and their theoretical basis as well as extensive, detailed instructions for carrying out the survey.

Research Questions

For all types of research, the purpose, as defined by the research questions, is used to drive and guide the design. During the 2016 G2 NAS Planning Workshop, ECZ, alongside RTI technical staff, developed the following research questions to guide the 2016 G2 NAS:

1. What, if any, improvements do we see in G2 pupils' foundational reading and math skills in the national languages in 2016 as compared to 2014?

[1] Changed to the Ministry of General Education (MOGE).
[2] The British Department for International Development (DFID) provided funding for the Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) portion of the NAS.
[3] RTI International. 2015. *National Assessment Survey of Learning Achievement at Grade 2: Results for Early Grade Reading and Mathematics in Zambia*. Report prepared for ECZ, USAID, and DFID under the Education Data for Decision Making (EdData II) project, Task Order No. AID-611-M-14-00002 (RTI Task 28). Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI.https://www.eddataglobal.org/countries/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubDetail&ID=833

2. What, if any, growth do we see in the percentages of G2 students achieving benchmarks (as set in 2014; see ***Annex A***), and is this growth in line with the 5-year targets ?
3. What are the impacts of the 2014 curriculum revisions on early literacy outcomes[4])?
4. What are the student outcomes in mathematics—both conceptual and operational—by G2?
5. What, if any, effects do individual, school-related, and/or socieoeconomic factors have on reading in any language, as well as on acquisition of mathematic skills?

The development of these questions first began with a thorough review of the research questions which drove the 2014 national assessment in Zambia. The 2014 research design and questions were then modified and adapted to define the research purposes for the 2016 national assessment. These research questions are what were used to determine and help tailor the sample design and implementation plan in the subsequent sections of this report.

2016 G2 NAS Sample Design and Plan

The sample design for the 2016 G2 NAS is the same as the design in 2014, and was developed in close collaboration with ECZ. The sample design allows for representation at the national and provincial level as well as by Zambian language. Details of the design are described below, followed by an explanation of the four-stage sampling plan. See also the sampling replacement protocol in ***Annex B.***

Sample Design

1) Select 40 schools in each of 12 strata, for a total of 480 schools. These 12 strata are formed by the cross-classification of province and language. See ***Table 1.***

Table 1. Strata for first stage of sampling

Stratum	Province	Language	Number of schools in...		Number of districts
			Population	Sample	
1	Central	Icibemba	1,284	50	11
2	Copperbelt	Icibemba	1,558	60	10
3	Eastern	Cinyanja	1,474	50	9
4	Luapula	Icibemba	822	40	11
5	Lusaka	Cinyanja	1,170	50	8

[4] This will be measured through the increased percentage of grade 2 children attaining the benchmarks after the national roll-out of new Primary Literacy Program Zambian language teachers' guides and learners' book which align with the curriculum revisions developed by Zambia's Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) under the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework in 2013.

Stratum	Province	Language	Number of schools in...		Number of districts
			Population	Sample	
6	Muchinga	Icibemba	883	40	7
7	North Western	Kiikaonde	337	20	11
8	North Western	Lunda	312	20	
9	North Western	Luvale	98	20	
10	Northern	Icibemba	1,005	40	9
11	Southern	Chitonga	1,435	50	13
12	Western	Silozi	985	40	16
Total			**11,363**	**480**	**109**

2) Select at least 40 urban schools, 40 rural schools, and 40 schools in each of four school types (government, private, grant-aided, and community). The only sparse categories among these are grant-aided schools and private schools. There are 331 grant-aided schools in the population, and 650 private schools in the population.
3) Use cluster sampling for cost effectiveness reasons.

Sampling Plan

First Stage

Use the strata from Table 1. Select four clusters from each stratum, where the clusters are geographic areas called "districts." There are 109 districts in Zambia. The districts will be ordered by the proportion of urban schools. Draw a systematic probability proportional to size (PPS) sample, where the size measure is the number of students. Allow large districts to be selected more than once.

Note: This stage will be skipped in the three strata in the North Western province (see Second Stage below) because of the following challenges:

- the population speaking the language was contained within one district (i.e., certain to be selected), and/or
- there were two languages of instruction in one district (varying by schools), and/or
- the population speaking the language was too small to consider or to require this clustering approach because they were already very close geographically.

Second Stage

Within each of the 36 selected districts, select a total of 10 schools. Stratify by school type (private, grant-aided, other). Select exactly one private school and exactly one grant-aided school, with probability proportional to size. From the "other" stratum, sort the schools by

school type (government, community, unknown) and draw a systematic PPS sample of 8 schools.

For each of the three strata in the North Western province, ignore the districts. Sub-stratify by school type (private, grant-aided, other). Select exactly four private schools and exactly four grant-aided schools, with PPS. From the "other" sub-stratum, sort by urban/rural, then school type (government, community, unknown), and draw a systematic PPS sample of 32 schools.

Third Stage

Select one grade 2 class at random out of the grade 2 classes at the sampled school.

Fourth Stage

Select five boys and five girls at random from the selected grade 2 class.

Costed Implementation Plan

The costed implementation plan as described in this section is an estimated or suggested budget, generated by the *EGRA Calculator*. The *EGRA Calculator* is an Excel-based estimation tool that produces an approximate budget reflecting the costs commonly associated with implementing an EGRA.[5]

There are certain commonalities or factors among all EGRA implementations that can influence the overall budget. Key design aspects which are known to directly affect costs include

- Sample size
- Number of grades being sampled
- Number of languages being assessed
- Number of types of assessments that each sampled pupil will complete
- Subtasks to be administered
- Reporting results by province
- Number of assessors and supervisors
- Number of assessor teams

Additionally, context, research questions, scope, and sample design (which vary for each EGRA) heavily impact the cost of implementing an EGRA survey. During the initial planning stages for the 2016 G2 NAS, these essential pieces of information were deliberated and ultimately decided upon. The design decisions which were reached are reflected in these calculations and budget figures.

First, the *EGRA Calculator* itself was adapted from its original format for the Zambian context. For example, unit costs for various items (e.g., pens, paper, clipboards) listed in the calculator were updated to reflect average costs of items in Zambia; see ***Table 2.*** Other items

[5] The *EGRA Calculator* adapted for Zambia is able to account for costs associated with other assessment tools which may be administered alongside the EGRA—for example, EGMA. Such adjustments are made within the tool under Instruction #3: How many instruments will be administered per student?

were removed or altered as necessary. For example, RTI, through its subcontractor INESOR, transferred 115 tablets to ECZ in March 2016. As such, new tablets will not need to be procured for the 2016 data collection. However, funding to account for tablet accessories is included within the budget should some accessories need to be replaced (e.g. new tablet case, lost stylus) in preparation for the 2016 data collection.

Table 2. Unit costs for common data collection items and supplies

Item	Unit costs (US$)	Comments
Venue	$500.00	Daily rate
Lunch / tea break during workshop trainings	$8.00	Per participant per day
Data collectors per diem / payment	$109.00	Daily rate
Data supervisors per diem / payment	$131.00	Daily rate
Transport to schools during pilot	$70.00	For fuel and driver for a bus per day (10 people)
Transport to schools during data collection	$100.00	For fuel and driver for a car per day (4 people)
Assessors' transportation to training	$30.00	$15.00 each way
Lodging	$50.00	In towns during data collection
Supplies	**Unit costs (US$)**	**Comments**
Photocopies	$0.30	Per page
Flipcharts	$5.00	
Stopwatch	$5.00	
Clipboard	$3.00	
Notepad	$2.00	
Pen / pencil / eraser / sharpener / markers	$0.50	
Folder / envelope	$1.00	
Stapler	$3.00	
Bags for supplies	$20.00	
Power cords / strips	$20.00	
Pupil gifts (pencil, notebook)	$0.50	
USB or other storage device	$20.00	

Item	Unit costs (US$)	Comments
Phone and SIM card	$0.50	
Tablet accessories	$10.00	
Mobile hotspot	$60.00	
Mobile phone airtime	$10.00	Per team per day

Next, parameters and inputs were further adjusted within the tool. While some information must be inserted manually, other inputs are automatically calculated within the tool. For example, when the total sample size and the number of assessors, supervisors, and assessor teams are inserted, the calculator is able to estimate the total number of days needed to complete data collection. The tool then produces an estimated budget figure, which is a direct reflection of the selected parameters.

Based on the research questions and the sample design for the 2016 G2 NAS (see preceding sections of this report), the *EGRA Calculator* estimated a total budget of US$574,490. Based on the March 2016 exchange rate, the budget is estimated at 12.2 million Zambian Kwacha. ***Table 3*** shows the estimated parameters that will be needed in order to complete the 2016 G2 NAS. Based on these inputs, the table also shows the total estimate in US dollars and in local currency.

Table 3. Parameters and estimates for 2016 G2 NAS

Parameters	Estimate
Total sample (number of pupils)	4,800
Number of pupils per grade per school	10
Number of data collectors per team	3
Number of teams	50
Total number of data collectors	150
Total number of assessments	9,600
Number of days for data collection	16
Number of pupils per assessor per school	4
Number of schools	480
Total estimate based on inputs (US$)	**574,490**
Currency exchange rate (local currency/US$)	**21**
Total estimate in local currency (Kwacha)	**12,257,343**

Breakdown of Costs by Task

Task 1: General Project Planning

During this task, ECZ will begin to procure items that will be needed throughout implementation. It is a best practice to purchase materials early in the planning process to allow for items to be inventoried and organized. ***Table 4*** lists suggested supplies needed for EGRA implementation and their associated costs. The subtotal is calculated based on how many of each item is needed, as determined by the 2016 G2 NAS research and sample design.

Table 4. Other direct costs (ODCs) for general project planning

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
1. General project planning					
USB storage device	20.00	50	—	21,340.00	1,000.00
Phone cards / SIM cards	0.50	55	—	586.85	27.50
Tablet accessories	10.00	155	—	33,077.00	1,550.00
Mobile hotspot	60.00	50	—	64,020.00	3,000.00
Other (specify)	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal 1	—	—	—	**119,023.85**	**5,577.50**

Task 2: EGRA Instrument Adaptation Workshop

Instruments that were developed in 2014 served as the basis for the 2016 survey instruments. Therefore, for this task, the adaptation process required only modifying the 2014 instruments rather than conducting a full adaptation workshop. This activity took place at the above-mentioned 2016 G2 NAS Planning Workshop, funded by USAID. Assessment experts, language experts, and subject matter experts were brought together for three days to modify and update the existing instruments. ***Table 5*** below estimates the cost of conducting such a workshop, consisting of 40 people for three days. The estimate in Table 5 is included in this report as an example only. The estimate from Table 5 is *excluded* from the total budget in Table 3.

Table 5. ODCs for EGRA instrument adaptation workshop

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
2. EGRA instrument adaptation workshop					
Workshop venue	500.00		3	32,010.00	1,500.00
Food (meals / tea breaks)	8.00	40	3	20,486.40	960.00
Participants' per diem	131.00	40	3	335,464.80	15,720.00
Participants' transportation	30.00	40	3	76,824.00	3,600.00
School visit transport	70.00	3	3	13,444.20	630.00
Supplies and photocopies	—	—	—	79,150.06	2,785.00
Lodging	50.00	40	3	128,040.00	6,000.00
Subtotal 2	—	—	—	**685,419.46**	**31,195.00**

Task 3: Recruitment of Data Collectors and Supervisors

An estimate of US$400 is included in the budget to account for costs associated with advertising and recruiting for data collectors and supervisors. ECZ will determine the appropriate channels for advertising and recruiting for assessors and supervisors, at which time this estimated amount will be updated to reflect actual expected costs.

Task 4: Data Collector Training

For this task, ECZ will plan and execute a five-day workshop to train data collectors and supervisors how to use the assessment instruments and properly follow administration protocols. ***Table 6*** is the breakdown of costs associated with conducting a five-day training workshop for 158[6] attendees.

[6] The determined number of assessors needed to complete data collection is 150 (as shown in Table 3). The additional 8 participants may include trainers, observers, or management staff.

Table 6. ODCs for data collector training

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
4. Data collector training					
Workshop venue	500.00		5	53,350.00	2,500.00
Food (meals / tea breaks)	8.00	158	5	134,868.80	6,320.00
Participants' transportation	30.00	158	—	101,151.60	4,740.00
School visit transport	70.00	3	1	4,481.40	210.00
Supplies and photocopies	—	—	—	95,251.09	4,463.50
Lodging	50.00	79	5	84,293.00	3,950.00
Subtotal 4	—	—	—	**473,395.89**	**22,183.50**

Task 5: Pilot Data Collection

ECZ will pilot each survey instrument. To ensure that the pilot data are sufficient for the psychometric analysis that establishes test validity and reliability, a minimum of 150 nonzero scores must be collected. In 2014, just under 1,500 pupils were assessed during the pilot over the course of two days of data collection. During the pilot, assessors went in larger teams to selected schools and assessed all grade 2 pupils in the school. In Zambia, pupils in grades 3 and 4 were also assessed in some pilot schools, in order to boost the number of nonzero scores to properly analyze how the instruments performed. ***Table 7*** shows the estimated subtotal for carrying out the pilot data collection. Note: the number of units for lodging reflects the assumption that assessors will share lodging (2 per room) during pilot data collection.

Table 7. ODCs for pilot data collection

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
5. Pilot data collection					
Data collectors' per diem	109	90	2	418,690.80	19,620.00
Transport to schools	70	9	2	26,888.40	1260
Supplies and photocopies	—	—	—	29,257.14	1,371.00
Lodging	50	45	2	96,030.00	4,500.00
Subtotal 5	—	—	—	**566,609.01**	**26,551.50**

Task 6: Data Collection

Following the pilot study and assessor training tasks, ECZ will oversee the data capture process. Based on the number of assessors and supervisors, and given the total number of assessments that will be administered, the data collection process is estimated to take 16 days to complete. For budgeting purposes, an extra two days are included to account for unexpected or unforeseen circumstances that may prolong the data collection. The number of units for transportation and lodging reflect the assumption that assessors will share rooms and transport during data collection days. ***Table 8*** outlines the direct costs that can be expected during this task.

Table 8. ODCs for data collection

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
6. Data collection / data capture					
Assessors' per diem	109.00	100	18	4,186,908.00	196,200.00
Supervisors' per diem	131.00	50	18	2,515,986.00	117,900.00
Transport	100.00	50	18	1,920,600.00	90,000.00
Supplies and photocopies	—	—	—	618,657.27	28,990.50
Lodging	50.00	80	18	1,536,480.00	72,000.00
Subtotal 6	—	—	—	**10,778,631.27**	**505,090.50**

Task 7: Results Dissemination Workshop

Assessment alone is not enough to improve reading achievement and reading instruction. Results from the assessment must be used to inform policy, influence teaching practices, guide how or where resources are used, etc. ***Table 9*** maps out expected costs that are associated with a two- to three-day policy dialogue workshop. Once analysis is finalized, ECZ will prepare to share and effectively communicate results with the wider community of stakeholders. ECZ will use the policy dialogue workshop for the purposes of bringing together government officials and other stakeholders at the national level to inform the interpretation of the results and guide decision making. A final version of the report can incorporate recommendations that emerge from this event. Dissemination of printed reports to regional officials is accounted for in the budget to allow further distribution of the results from the national-level policy dialogue to each region.

Table 9. ODCs for results dissemination workshop

Tasks	Unit cost, US$	Units (number of people or items)	Number of days (if applicable)	Total cost, local currency	Total cost, US$
7. Results dissemination workshop					
Workshop venue	500.00		3	32,010.00	1,500.00
Food (meals / tea breaks)	8.00	30	3	15,364.80	720.00
Participants' transportation	30.00	30	1	19,206.00	900.00
Supplies and photocopies	—	—	—	8,536.00	400.00
Lodging	50.00	30	3	96,030.00	4,500.00
Printed Reports	45.00	150		140,000.00	6,667
Subtotal 7	—	—	—	**311,146.80**	**14,687.00**

Timeline for Implementing the 2016 G2 NAS

In order to effectively implement all the tasks mentioned in the above Costed Implementation Plan, ECZ developed a timeline of events and activities to be carried out in 2016 (see ***Table 10***). During the planning stage, the following factors were discussed and considered:

- Challenging seasons in which to conduct data collection (rainy season)
- Schedules for other national assessments in which ECZ will be involved (e.g., national examinations in grades 7, 9, and 12)
- School calendar (pupils on break in August)
- 2016 national elections (11 August 2016)
- Goal to have preliminary findings disseminated before the end of 2016

Following the discussion and acknowledgement of these context specific considerations, ECZ drafted the timeline, which they will closely follow in order to complete the G2 NAS.

Table 10. Implementation timeline

	Feb 2016	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2017
Step 1: Finalize the instruments												
Step 2: Render the instruments into Tangerine®												
Step 3: Pilot the 2016 instruments												
Step 4: Analyze the pilot data												
Step 4: Revise and finalize the instruments												
Step 5: Lead assessor training												
Step 6: Collect data												
Step 7: Clean data												
Step 8: Analyze and write preliminary findings												
Step 9: Disseminate preliminary findings												

Annex A. 2014 National benchmarks and targets for reading and mathematics in Zambia

BENCHMARKS AND TARGETS		READING			MATHEMATICS	
		NONWORD DECODING	ORAL READING FLUENCY	READING COMPRE-HENSION	MISSING NUMBER	ADDITION AND SUBTRAC-TION LEVEL 2
Benchmarks		**cwpm**	**cwpm**	**% correct**	**% correct**	**% correct**
	Emergent readers and mathematicians	15	20	40%	30%	40%
	Readers and mathematicians	30	45	80%	60%	70%
Targets (percentages of pupils)						
Zero score	Baseline (2014 study data)	68%	65%	80%	15%	44%
	Proposed 5-year target	27%	26%	32%	6%	18%
Emergent readers and mathematicians	Baseline (2014 study data)	12%	11%	7%	26%	19%
	Proposed 5-year target	36%	33%	21%	39%	30%
Readers and mathematicians	Baseline (2014 study data)	2%	1%	2%	4%	9%
	Proposed 5-year target	8%	4%	8%	12%	27%

Annex B. Zambia National Sample – School Replacement Protocol

2016 EGRA Data Collection

Situations allowing use of a replacement school:

School is unsuitable

1. When a school (or District Education Officer) is contacted before the scheduled visit and it is discovered that the language taught is different from the language detailed in the schools sample list (note that Mumbwa district schools should all have language taught of Tonga).
2. Field supervisor will contact XX to be assigned a replacement school.

School is closed

1. If an assessor personally visits a school and finds the school closed (with no teachers or students present) and finds no one present to help to schedule a return visit, the assessor will contact subcontractor and schedule a time to return to the school.
2. If, upon a second visit to the school, the school remains closed and no one is present to determine the cause or other options for scheduling, the assessor will contact subcontractor (INESOR) to request that a replacement school be assigned.
3. Field supervisor will contact XX to be assigned a replacement school.

School is inaccessible

1. If because of unforeseen severe weather or other event an assessor is not able to travel to the school despite making a reasonable attempt, the assessor will contact subcontractor and schedule a time to attempt to visit the school again.
2. If, upon a second attempt, the assessor is again unable to travel to the school despite making a reasonable attempt, the assessor will contact subcontractor to request that a replacement school be assigned.
3. Field supervisor will contact XX to be assigned a replacement school.

NOTE: It is very likely that some schools will have less than the contracted students to be assessed. In these circumstances, the assessor will contact XX to give school name and reason why the school lacked the required number of students. However, the assessor should proceed to assess the students in this school.